Export Oriented Industrial Zone in Gujarat

778. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujarat has undertaken to implement a 100 per cent export oriented industrial zone (EOIZ) near Gandhi Nagar, Ankleshwar, Vapi and Surat;

(b) whether a proposal to upgrade EOIZ into EPZ to facilitate the substantial potential of exports from Gujarat is pending for clearance with Government ; and

(c) if so, what measures are being taken to accord early clearance to the proposal ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) No proposal of the Gujarat Government for establishing 100% Export Oriented Industrial Zone has been received in this Ministry. However, its proposal for setting up of an Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP) at Savil in Baroda District has recently been received which will be considered at the next meeting of Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee for EPIP to be held on 14-12-94.

Direct Border Trade with Bangladesh and Myanmar

779. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the North Eastern States had been demanding the opening of direct border trade with Bangladesh and Myanmar ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the reaction of Government in this regard ;

(d) whether it is also a fact that Indo-Myanmar land route trade agreement which was expected to be signed in October, 1994 has been deferred indefinitely affecting the border trade part; and

(e) if so, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) This Ministry has received suggestions from some North Eastern States for resuming border trade wtih Bangladesh and Myanmar. After mutual consultation with the Govt. of Myanmar, the Govt. of India has since concluded a Border Trade Agreement with Myanmar, which was signed on 21-1-94. The Border Trade between India & Myanmar is proposed to be conducted initially through two points viz., Morsh in Manipur and Champai in Mizoram.

As regards Bangladesh in the Joint Economic Commission meeting held on 28-12-1993, in Dhaka, mutual need and desirability for border trade was stressed.

(d) and (e) Do not arise. Since the Border Trade Agreement with Myanmar has already been signed.

Imposition of Tax on Import of Flowers

780. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that European Union Countries have imposed 15 percent tax on flowers imported from India ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some organisation has urged Government to strongly take up the issue with European Union Commission for granting exemption ; and

(d) if so, what action Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The 15% tariff however, is not a new tax but the existing MFN (Most Favoured Nation) rate which applies to all countries exporting flowers to EU except least developed countries and those with whom special preferential bilateral Agreements exist.

(c) and (d) Government have received representations from exporters from time to time pressing for waiver of 15% tariff being imposed by the EU. Government's proposal for improvement in the EU's Generalised System of Preferences have been formally conveyed which includes a plea for duty reduction to Zero in the case of cut flowers. These suggestions were reiterated in the course of Indo-EU Joint Commission meeting held in October, 1994.

Imposing Social Clause Linkage Under GATT

781. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : Will the Minister of COMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India and China have agreed to oppose any social clause linkage in international trade under GATT or other wise;

(b) if so, the details in this regard ; and

(c) what precise steps or efforts have been made or are being made by the developed countries to bring about such linkage in international trade ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) The social clause is not under consideration in GATT at present. China is not a member of GATT.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In the run-up to the Marrakesh Ministerial meeting in April,1994 there were attempts by some developed countries, particularly France and the US to place on the agenda of the World Trade Organisation a consideration of the link between international trade and labour standards. This was resisted by a number of developing countries and some developed countries and the issue could not get inscribed on the agenda of the World Trade Organisation. Discussions are presently being held in the ILO. India, China and a number of other developing and some developed countries are opposed to linking international trade with labour standards.

Bonded labour in various states of the country

782. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the number of bonded labour identified in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh Madhya Pradesh and Bihar during the last three years ;

(b) the steps taken by Government for their rehabilitation ; and

(c) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) The number of bonded labourers identified in Orissa, Andhra Praesh,